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Stourport-on-Severn
Urban District Council.



ANNUAL REPORTS

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF

HEALTH

AND

THE SANITARY INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR

. . . 1937 . . .

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1937.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my forty-fifth Annual Report.

Health Officers :—

Medical Officer of Health (part time), E. STANLEY ROBINSON.

Surveyor & Sanitary Inspector, LEWIS H. POOLE, M.I.M.C.E., C.R.S.I.

Assistant Sanitary Inspector, D. G. JONES.

From 20 to 30 men are employed from time to time on sanitary work.

STATISTICS & SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

The statistics are compiled from data supplied by the Registrar-General which do not always coincide with those obtained from the local registrar.

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	...	3204
Registrar-General's estimate of resident population mid 1937	...	...	...	...	...	7709
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1937)	...	...	...	...	...	2235
Rateable value & the sum represented by a penny rate	£63,000	£251				

Vital statistics of the year relate to the net births and deaths after correction for inward and outward transfers as furnished by the Registrar-General.

Statistics of small populations for short periods are often misleading.

Live Births, Legitimate	Total 114.	Male 55.	Female 59.
Illegitimate	„ 5.	„ 4.	„ 1.
Stillbirths	... „ 7.	„ 3.	„ 4.
Deaths	... „ 104.	„ 52.	„ 52.
Birth rate	... 15·4.	England & Wales	... 14·9.
Death rate	... 13·4.	England & Wales	... 12·4.
Sillbirths.	Rate per 1000 live and stillbirths.		
	·5.	England & Wales	·6.

Deaths from Puerperal causes ... nil.

Death rate of Infants under one year of age :—

All infants per 1000 live births	...	...	...	50
Legitimate infants	...	...	...	43
Illegitimate infants	...	...	...	7
Deaths from Cancer	...	...	...	18
„ Measles	...	...	...	nil
„ Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	...	...	...	nil

<i>Causes of Death, 1937.</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Influenza	2	4	6
Heart Disease	12	8	20
Circulatory Disease	2	0	2
Bronchitis	2	6	8
Pneumonia	3	1	4
Other Respiratory Disease	1	1	2
Cerebral Haemorrhage	4	8	12
Peptic Ulcer	1	1	2
Digestive Disease	0	2	2
Nephritis	2	0	2
Diabetes	1	0	1
Congenital Disease & Prematurity	3	1	4
Senility	0	4	4
Suicide	1	0	1
Other Violence	4	3	7
Tuberculosis Respiratory	2	1	3
Other Tuberculosis	0	1	1
Cancer	9	9	18
Other defined Diseases	4	2	6

Cancer.—As usual the mortality from this disease in the district is high.

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Stomach and Bowel	6	1	7
Lung	1	0	1
Gullet	0	1	1
Tonsil	1	0	1
Bladder	1	0	1
Breast	0	7	7
Ovary	0	1	1

Unfortunately the onset of the disease is generally insidious and the doctor is not consulted till treatment—by surgery or radium has been too long delayed.

Tuberculosis.—Of the 3 deaths registered it is more than doubtful if one can be properly attributed to this disease: in any case the number compares favourably with that of last year—7.

Infant Mortality.—The rate for the year is lower than it has been for many years and is, for the first time, lower than that of England and Wales.

England & Wales 58. Stourport-on-Severn 50.

Violence.—1 gas suicide, 2 drownings, 2 due to burns or scalds, 3 to fractures, and 1 to a motor-cycle accident.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

During the war it became increasingly apparent that a large proportion of the population was more or less unfit.

The Government awoke to the fact that housing conditions among the working classes was deplorable: a Housing Campaign was initiated and, up to the present, many hundreds of thousands of houses have been built; nearly 300 have been built in this district. The work still goes on.

The Government have now taken a further step by instituting a National Fitness Campaign. Conferences are being held throughout the Country and literature distributed on the subjects of proper feeding and physical exercises with the hope that the ordinary person may take an interest in his—or her—own health and that of those with whom they come in contact.

But, since the war it has not been easy to get the public to take an interest in anything—Religion, Politics or even Work.

The craze for excitement and other forms of self indulgence is paramount and wide-spread.

In districts such as this where female labour in the factories prevents a woman from fulfilling her proper function in the home, the art of cooking is being replaced by the use of tinned foods: these may be reasonably tolerated as a stop-gap but not to the exclusion of properly cooked fresh food as is so often the case.

I have seen food provided for invalids and convalescents that was only fit for the refuse bin and doubtless much of it did indeed find its way there.

In the matter of clothing there has been a distinct advance: light garments sufficient to keep the body reasonably warm have replaced constricting corsets and unnecessary petticoats which overburdened the wearer: children, in particular, are generally more intelligently clothed to the greater benefit of their health.

Exercise :— No system of physical jerks can replace the more natural methods of walking, running, climbing and playing games. Middle-aged women clothed in blouses and shorts performing set movements indoors make rather a pathetic spectacle: the necessary exercise could be better obtained by helping a housemaid to turn out a room with the windows open or taking the children for a walk and teaching them to employ their powers of observation.

Modern life with its self-indulgencies is having a serious effect on the nervous systems of the population: with children the habits of nail nibbling, finger picking with twitching faces and jerky limbs are more common than they used to be: they are more excitable and more irritable: their nervous systems are unstable.

Late dances are bad for young men and women—not from alcoholic excess, for that is rare nowadays in the class to which I am referring, but parents tell me that they return home in the early hours of the morning overtired but too excited to sleep restfully (there isn't much time for sleep if they are to be at work punctually) and next day they are irritable and listless and lack interest in their work.

At the Cinemas films of clinging lovers and hairbreadth escapes, over-excite young men and women sitting close together in the dark.

The percentage of patients needing sedative medicines is increasing: before the war it was about 10%, nowadays it is between 30% and 40%. This is particularly noticeable among men & women under 40, a time when they ought to be enjoying life to the full: instead of which they come to the doctor complaining "it's my nerves that are wrong, doctor." And so it is.

There can be little doubt that the publicity given to the subject of childbirth of late years in the public press, incidentally stressing unduly maternal mortality and morbidity, has scared some illbalanced women from bearing children and thus enjoying the inestimable joys of motherhood.

But there is a type becoming common among newly married couples who deliberately adopt contraceptive measures from purely selfish motives: who choose to have a car instead of a family and a silky haired abomination to cuddle instead of a baby: in years to come they will bitterly rue their unnatural decision—some are already doing it. They will miss the companionship of young life and many will become neurasthenics and chronic dyspeptics and life will have lost its savour. Without the buffer of a family, home life often tends to become cat and dog and if the matrimonial bond still holds good—for illicit relationships are not uncommon in such circumstances—they will be rather glad when a premature old age carries one or other to the borders of the Styx.

Another type of newly married couple decide to have one child: the result is often unsatisfactory, a poor little creature, pale, peaky and petulant, brought up on highly advertised patent foods—a victim to the vice of vitamins. A bone of contention to overfond parents, a misery to itself and a nuisance to others, a bore to the doctor but a boon to his pocket.

It is generally useless to remonstrate with this type of patient their replies usually are more or less like the following:

"You know doctor we must live up to the present day standards or be left behind in the race and in such circumstances a family is quite impossible."

Diphtheria.—Of the 5 cases notified 1 was withdrawn. 1 case, a scholar at Wribbenhall School, lived on the edge of the district: he was attending as an out-patient at the Kidderminster Hospital at the time of attack. 1 case was a scholar at the Senior School and 2 were gypsies living at Titton. Each case was given anti-toxin, sent to hospital and recovered.

Immunisation.—Although only 4 cases were notified during the year diphtheria had been prevalent throughout the county and in adjoining districts so, after consultation with the County Medical Officer, I advised the Council to offer immunisation of school children to all parents who wished to avail themselves of this means of prevention. Circulars were issued by order of the Council, their distribution and the reception of replies being kindly undertaken by the schoolmasters and mistresses. 417 children out of 1092 accepted—by their parents—the Council's offer and arrangements are being taken by the County Council to carry out the innoculation, the officers of the District Council undertaking the necessary clerical work.

Puerperal Pyrexia.—Of 7 cases notified 6 occurred at the Maternity Hospital. All recovered.

Pneumonia.—12 cases were notified, all but three of persons of middle age: many post influenzal. 4 died.

Chicken-pox.—7 cases were notified. The type was mild.

Erysipelas.—3 cases were notified. All recovered.

Ophthalmic Neonatorum.—1 case occurred at the Maternity Hospital and recovered without any impairment of sight.

A circular (1596) issued by the Ministry of Health in February makes it obligatory on every medical practitioner to notify each case of this disease direct to the Medical Officer of Health of the Maternity & Child Welfare Authority—that is in this area the County Medical Officer of Health.

Influenza.—This disease was epidemic throughout the district in January, February and March: it was very infectious. At first persons of middle age were chiefly affected and it became difficult to carry on work normally at some offices and factories. Later on the school children were attacked and in one school more than half the scholars were absent at the time of my visit. Two schools were closed for a short time. The type varied considerably, the onset was sometimes sudden, more generally insidious: complications were not frequent but there were 6 deaths.

Measles.—Was epidemic in February, March and April: it was fairly extensive but the type was generally mild and complications few.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1937.

Particulars of new cases of tuberculosis and of deaths from the disease in the area during 1937.

Age Periods.	New Cases †				Deaths ‡			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0— ...								
1— ...								
5— ...			1					
15— ...			1	1				
25— ...	2							1
35— ...	2							
45— ...								
55— ...					1			
65 and upwards	1	1			1			
Totals ...	5	1	2	1	2	0	0	1

The number of cases on the register on January 1st.

Pulmonary.

Non-Pulmonary.

Males—12. Females—9. Males—6. Females—10.

The number of cases on the register on December 31st.

13. 9. 3. 6.

Pulmonary cases increased by 1.

Non-pulmonary cases diminished by 7.

The improvement in the quality of the milk supply may account for this : most of the cases of abdominal tuberculosis are probably contracted through milk.

Cases removed from the County or otherwise lost sight of	8
Cases admitted to a sanatorium	7
Cases discharged from a sanatorium	6
Cases which recovered or in which the disease was arrested	3

The Secretary of the Worcestershire King Edward the VII Memorial Sanatorium informs me that the disease in at least half the patients admitted is so far advanced that the prospect of recovery is very slight. For various reasons—delay in notification, dislike of institutional life, natural anxiety as to what is to become of their dependants—and above all love of home,

dated February 22nd, 1937, which read "after giving the matter careful consideration, he has decided to approve the Council's proposals—for the provision of pontoon swimming baths—in principle." The opposition was based chiefly on the fact that certain houseboats discharge sewage into the river : also the sewage of Bewdley is, to some extent discharged into the river. With regard to the first point steps can and should be taken by the Council to prevent that pollution and the County Council is prepared to support any such steps. Regarding the second point it is within the knowledge of the Council that a sewage scheme is already under way which should deal effectively with that nuisance before very long. The County Medical Officer writes:—"It seems to me that your suggestions are eminently practicable : in view of the improved arrangements at Bewdley, which should materialise in the near future, if the houseboats can be dealt with the river baths with the water flowing through them should prove quite satisfactory. No doubt you will adopt similar methods of screening as are in use at other open air baths." The cost of an inland swimming bath of suitable size would be three or four times that of pontoon baths and the expense of maintenance, filtering, aerating and chlorinating the water would put a heavy burden on the rates. Moreover the urine, faeces, saliva sweat and other discharges from the skin including dirt and shreds from bathing costumes which analysis proves are present in the water passing out of an inland swimming bath are still there though sterilised when the water re-enters the bath : for the same water is used again and again. They are not retained in a flowing stream of a pontoon swimming bath. Taking the advantages and disadvantages of the alternative schemes I recommended the Council to provide pontoon swimming baths. However nothing further is being done at present.

Schools—In the early months of the year the school children were affected, with the rest of the community, by Influenza, especially the scholars of Tan Lane, St. John, Wilden and Areley Kings : other departments were also attacked but the type was milder and recoveries quicker. Several visits were paid to the schools aforementioned : the numbers were much diminished and those present looked so poorly that closure was advised for varying periods. At the end of February Measles became epidemic and lasted till the end of May : fortunately the type was mild, complications were few—probably owing to the mild weather and there was no fatal case. So far as my recollection goes this is the first epidemic without a fatality during my term of office as medical officer of health, 45 years. The type of epidemic disease generally has become milder.

Summer Time.—I am convinced that this has a deleterious affect on the health of young children. I am confirmed in this opinion by the school teachers who tell me the children are dull, sleepy and listless. Parents are a good deal to blame for many children may be seen playing in the streets as late as 10 o'clock at night. The new system of collecting older children from the rural districts and taking them to school by bus has disadvantages: no physical exercises can compare with walking, and packed together they are stinted of the powers of observation which are so valuable in their passage through the country side. Besides which infection is more readily distributed in a vehicle packed with children. And small children are bereft of proper supervision on their way to schools—sometimes two or more miles distant.

Public cleansing.—The ordinary type of dust cart with canvas cover which proved quite inadequate in windy weather has been replaced by a vehicle with sliding steel cover. The refuse is still deposited on land adjacent to a main road and constitutes a nuisance when the wind is in certain directions.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.—In my last annual report I called attention to the need of some quicker form of transport than a cycle if the Sanitary Inspector was to inspect the extended district efficiently. The Council has since decided to increase his salary so that he is now able to use a car.

Smoke Abatement.—Many complaints have been received of the nuisance arising from smoke discharged from the stacks of the Power Station which is likely to be increased by the erection of another stack: at times smoke hovers over and dust is deposited on Areley Common. Owing to the halfhearted opposition of a dis-interested County Council Hartlebury Common is to be further defaced by the erection of more pylons. Meanwhile the cost of electricity has not been lowered.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk:—The Ministry of Health—by the Milk and Dairies Amendment Order, March, 1938, are taking further steps to ensure that milking cows are free from tuberculosis.

The quality of the milk in the district is generally satisfactory and the standard of cows seen in the surrounding country is distinctly higher than it was two or three years ago.

Meat:—The quality of meat offered for sale in the district is generally excellent. The slaughterhouses are regularly inspected. The bakehouses are also regularly inspected.

Nutrition:—I have made several inspections of children—especially infants—during the year: the great majority shew no signs of mal-nutrition.

HOUSING.

Number of houses occupied at the end of 1937	...	2235
Estimated population (middle of 1937)	... ..	7709
Number of houses scheduled for demolition	...	69
Number already demolished	... ..	49
Number not demolished and still occupied	... ..	19
Number not demolished and not occupied	... ..	1
Number scheduled for re-conditioning	... ..	29
Number of back to back houses	... ..	81
Number scheduled as overcrowded	... ..	70
Number of applicants for Council Houses (approximately)		150

The following reasons for application were given for application :—Living in rooms, working in district but living outside, insufficient accommodation, high rent, and other reasons including health.

Present number of Council Houses	275
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The above table emphasises the need for more houses which private enterprise has failed to supply.

A scheme for providing more houses on the Manor Road site has been adopted by the Council, the number being 108

This scheme will deal only with slum clearance and overcrowding.

Apart from this there is ample evidence of the need for additional housing accommodation in the district.

Besides which the Air Ministry have approached the Council in regard to building houses for men to be employed at the new Hartlebury Air Force Depot: the Council have agreed to consider favourably this application.

In consequence the Council have decided to build at least another 100 houses, a proportion of which are to be placed at the disposal of the Air Force.

Seven sites were suggested, viz :—

Wilden Top	... ..	2 sites.
Wilden Lane	... ..	1 site.
Lickhill Rd.	... ..	2 sites.
Walshes Farm	... ..	1 site.
Martley Rd.	... ..	1 site.

Each site will have, when the sewage scheme is completed, the amenities of the town water supply, town drainage electricity and gas.

Wilden Top.—As a certain number of houses are to be allotted to men employed at the Air Force Depot these sites are obviously most convenient for them : it is about two miles from the sites to the Depot : the Walshes site is 2 miles further away and to get there entails passing right through the town, no small matter at the end of a day's work. Hartlebury Common is only half a mile away. And a good road is already available to the town.

Lickhill Road Site.—A few years ago this was a narrow curly lane : at a cost of over £11000—one of the ostensible reasons for development being the provision of housing sites—this became a wide concrete road. On one side are cottages occupied by workers at the Steatite & Porcelain Works, the other side, for the most part company property, awaits development. And the Public Park is close by.

The Walshes Farm Site.—The present approach to this site is along a narrow curly lane : this would have to be widened, properly made and paths provided, adding very considerably to the cost of the scheme. Moreover it joins the narrow Dunley Road at a corner at the bottom of the Mill Bank, perhaps the most dangerous spot for motor traffic in the district. As there is but one path along the Dunley Rd. pedestrians must cross the road at this danger spot where many accidents have occurred. Until the Dunley Rd. has been widened and a path provided on both sides the development of this area is inadvisable.

Nevertheless this site has been preferred by the Council.

The Wilden Lane Site.—This is below the level of the road and opposite the Church and Schools : until the road is widened and paths provided this is unsuitable.

The Martley Rd. Site.—This is half a mile further from the town than the Walshes Farm site and would be still more inconvenient for employees at the Air Force Depot.

The Town Planning Officer writes to me that he has not been consulted by the Council on the subject of sites and until that is done he is unable to give an opinion on their respective merits.

The possibility of any alternative site that might be more convenient than the Walshes site for their employees has not, to my knowledge, been placed before the Air Ministry : it would only be fair to ask their opinion.

In my opinion the Wilden Top site is the best chiefly for its proximity to the Air Force Depot, also because it is near to Hartlebury Common : next best would be the Lickhill Rd. site which is close to the Public Park.

The Walshes site being 4 miles away from the Air Force Depot, it is doubtful if the Air Force Employees would go to live there if other accommodation were more accessible. And it would be more costly to develop.

Within the last few years private enterprise has started building—at Burlish, Wilden and, more lately, Bewdley Road. So that with the completion of these housing schemes the housing problem in the district should be solved and the demolition and re-conditioning of unfit houses proceed.

There can be no more remunerative way of spending public money on health services than by providing good houses for the working classes. A decent house tends not only to increase physical and mental health but induces a feeling of self respect and moral uplift. But no really satisfactory house for the wage earner with a large family can be built and let at an economic rent. Many Sanitary Authorities grant rebates in rent in accordance with the number of members of the family who are not wage earners but have to be fed and clothed nevertheless. I have no doubt that these conditions with bad housing have been partly responsible for the comparative high incidence of Tuberculosis and Infant Mortality in the district for the average wage is high and there is comparatively little real poverty and unemployment.

With better alternative accommodation available, landlords will be compelled to improve the standard of their property or risk losing their tenants.

Why don't more of the working classes build their own houses? They tell me that they cannot afford to sink their little capital and borrow money from building societies because of the uncertainty of continuity of employment. And again, a house that is large enough for a small family becomes too small when that family increases or grows up and the sexes require separate accommodation. This is a common occurrence in this district where a large number of young women are employed in factories.

The demolition order has pressed heavily on some landlords who have bought unsatisfactory property in ignorance and good faith and depended on the rents as a source of income. The cost of demolition has to be borne by the thus impoverished landlord and the value of the site is often negligible. The capital for re-building is not forthcoming. The lack of reasonable compensation for such property, when the landlords are really poor is a blot on the Bill : it is manifestly unjust and should not be tolerated.

The late Minister of Health—Sir Kingsley Wood—has expressed his regret that some of the picturesque old cottages must disappear if demolition orders are carried out. Unfortunately the cost of making them reasonably habitable is prohibitive and to keep them as relics of the past cannot appeal to a farmer who finds it difficult enough in these days to make both ends meet. The number of those who are able and willing to undertake the expense are but few while the utilitarian outlook of an authority whose chief concern is—or ought to be—for the public health makes demolition almost inevitable. And so The Walshes Cottages will disappear.

A Housing Manager has been appointed to supervise the property of the Council. At present there are 275 Council Houses : when the schemes in hand are completed there will be approximately 500. His duties comprise the collection of rents, maintenance of property, dealing with tenants' complaints, ordering repairs, preparation of specifications and examining completed work, dealing with applications for tenancies, keeping a list of applications and reporting thereon to the Housing Committee : visiting tenants to be displaced from unfit houses and arranging for disinfection where advisable prior to removal to Council houses : preparation of monthly reports for the Committee and keeping detailed reports of every tenancy and repairs carried out to each house. A full time job.

In accordance with the advice of the Town Planning Officer the Council have decided that Lower Heath is not a proper area for the erection of houses : I only wish that decision had been taken years ago when it was first recommended. The problem now is to get rid of a considerable number that the Council have allowed to be built to a great extent on waterlogged soil with wells and cesspools far too close to each other. Contamination of water supplies is a constant danger.

Camping Sttes.—These are becoming increasingly common. There is no power to deal with these under the Public Health Act 1936 unless they be occupied for more than 42 days continuously or 60 days in any one year. They can, however, be dealt with under other Public Health Acts if they become a danger for lack of proper water supply or sanitary arrangements.

1. *Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year :—*

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	110
(b) Number of inspections made for this purpose				230
(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected & recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	...	...	...	14
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose				30
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	12
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	2

2.	<i>Remedy of defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices :—</i>	
	Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers ...	60
3.	<i>Action under Statutory Powers during the Year :—</i>	
	(a)—Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :	
	(1) Number of dwelling-house in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ...	14
	(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—	11
	(a) By owners ...	11
	(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	3
	(b)—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :	
	(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ...	40
	(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :	
	(a) By owners ...	40
	(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	Nil
	(c)—Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :	
	(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ...	69
	(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ...	49
	(d)—Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :	
	(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ...	1
	(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit ...	Nil
4.	<i>Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding :—</i>	
	(a)—(i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year ...	70
	(ii) Number of families dwelling therein ...	75
	(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein ...	300

- (b)—Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year 1
- (c)—(i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year Nil
- (ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases Nil
- (d)—Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding Nil
- (e)—Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding conditions upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report. Conditions unaltered since 1936 report.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS
AND OTHER DISEASES.

Disease.				Total Cases notified*	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Smallpox	...	...	...	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	12	—	—
Diphtheria	...	...	...	4	4	—
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)				—	—	—
Puerperal Fever		...	...	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia		...	...	7	6	—
Pneumonia	...	...	...	12	—	4
Other diseases generally notifiable					—	
Ophthalmic Neonatorum			...	1	1	—
Other diseases notifiable locally						
Chicken-pox	...	...	...	7	—	—

Scarlatina.—12 cases were notified at various periods of the year : there was no epidemic : 3 were women working in factories—but not the same factory—1 other adult case was notified. Of the children, 2 didn't attend school : 3 schools were affected, at one school 3 cases, one of whom was discovered peeling at school 4 weeks after an attack of sore throat. The type of case was mild, they were all treated at home and recovered without complications. There was no secondary case and there is every reason to believe that *Scarlatina* is not so infectious as it used to be, nor does infection last so long as it did.

You realise, don't you doctor that with all the girls going to work in factories, domestic service is an insoluble problem : I can't do all the housework and have a family : and one must have some pleasure in life.

After more than 50 years of life as a family doctor among all classes I am impressed by the tendencies of the younger generation to live in the present and forget the future.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

Laboratory Services :— The County Laboratory, special Laboratories at Worcester Infirmary and Birmingham for Venereal Diseases.

Ambulance Facilities :—The services of the Kidderminster Corporation Ambulance have been arranged for and a retaining fee paid : an Ambulance in the district would be more satisfactory and save possible delay.

Nursing in the Home :—The Stourport and Wilden District Nursing Association now provide 3 Nurses instead of 2, two of them being nurse-midwives by arrangement with the County Council since the Midwives Act, 1936, came into force : the Areley Kings area shares with Astley the services of another nurse midwife. The Council granted the application of the Association for a Council House rent free : but it still has to pay rates. This very valuable health service should be provided by Government and not have to depend on charity.

Lucy Baldwin's Maternity Hospital :—

Number of beds in the General Wards	12		
Number of beds in the Private Wards	6		
Number of Nursing Staff	9		
Number of Domestic Staff	7		
Cases admitted in 1937	252	in 1936	256
Women delivered	236		225
Infants born alive	223		215
Infants still-born	13		10
Maternal Deaths	2		1
Infant Deaths	4		1

The cost of the Hospital for the last financial year worked out at £6 1. 5. per bed per week, including some items of capital expenditure—not much less than a pound a day. The large majority are normal cases.

Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector for the Year 1937.

THE COUNCIL HOUSE,
STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN.

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Stourport-on-Severn Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Annual Report of the work carried out during the year ended 31st December, 1937.

INSPECTIONS AND NOTICES.

During the year 680 visits on inspection and re-inspection were paid to houses and other premises under the various Acts, Byelaws and Regulations in connection with housing, abatement of nuisances, infectious diseases, etc. It was not found necessary to resort to legal proceedings during the year.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND DISINFECTANT.

Details of the various notifiable diseases are given in the Report of the Medical Officer of Health and the table below shows the number of certain types as compared with those for 1936.

Scarlet Fever	...	12	as against	5	in 1936.
Diphtheria	...	4	„	20	„

Disinfection and cleansing was carried out after the following cases :—

Scarlet Fever	...	12	as against	5	in 1936.
Diphtheria	...	6	„	22	„

As in previous years inspections, disinfections, cleansing and the supply of printed instructions and disinfectant has been continued.

REFUSE SCAVENGING.

This work has again been regularly and systematically carried out by the Council's workmen and details of the work so performed are as follows :—

<i>Dry Refuse.</i>		<i>Liquid Refuse.</i>	
Dust Bins emptied	114,671	Cesspools emptied	197
Ashpits emptied	10	Middens emptied	87
Loads removed	1,544	Pails emptied	16,561
		Loads removed	1,390

13,869 more bins, 4 ashpits and 2,083 pails were emptied than in 1936.

A four-wheeled horse drawn vehicle, mounted on pneumatic tyres and fitted with sliding steel covers was purchased to assist in this work and to replace the ordinary type of cart.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

The dairies, cowsheds and milkshops were inspected when the limewashing of the premises and the cleansing of the milk vessels was found to have received attention.

The cowsheds and dairy at one farm were considerably improved and re-constructed and a licence to sell Tuberculin Tested Milk under the Milk (Special Designation) Order 1936, was continued to the producer. Samples of the milk retailed have been taken at fairly frequent intervals and these on analysis show that the requirements have been met and maintained.

CANAL BOATS.

I beg to report that during the year ended the 31st December 1937, 14 Canal Boats were examined. All the boats were found to be satisfactory as regards repair, cleanliness, ventilation, etc. The occupants were generally healthy and no case of infectious disease was notified among their number.

By the passing of the Public Health Act, 1936, which came into operation on the 1st October last, the Council becomes a registration authority. No applications, however, for any boats were received between that date and the close of the year.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

There are no common lodging houses in the District.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

No offensive trades were established during the year.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

There are 41 of these in the District. In two instances it was necessary to call attention to the limewashing and cleansing.

No lists of outworkers were submitted.

Premises (1)	Number of		
	Inspections (2)	Written Notices (3)	Occupiers Prosecuted (4)
Factories (Including Factory Laundries)	40	nil	nil
Workshops (Including Workshop Laundries)	12	nil	nil
Total	52	nil	nil

WATER SUPPLY.

The total consumption of water for all purposes as registered by the meters at Mount Pleasant during the year amounted to 87,737,000 gallons, which was an increase of 6,850,000 gallons, as compared with that for 1936.

A further 91 houses were connected to the Council's mains. Of this number 53 were in the added areas which formerly obtained supplies from private wells.

The policy of re-washing taps free of cost, in order to reduce waste from this source, has been continued.

I am Gentleman,

Your obedient Servant,

LEWIS H. POOLE,

Sanitary Inspector.

